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NATO AND THE WARSAW PACT  
(FOURTH OF FOUR-PART SERIES)

ANNCR:

THE SIXTH NATO SUMMIT MEETING SINCE THE CREATION OF THE ALLIANCE 29 YEARS AGO WILL BE HELD HERE IN WASHINGTON ON MAY 30TH. THE AGENDA IS CERTAIN TO INCLUDE A REVIEW OF THE RELATIVE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION AND THE SOVIET-LED WARSAW PACT. VOA'S JULIAN GORSKI HAS THIS BACKGROUND REPORT:

VOICE:

MUCH IS BEING SAID AND WRITTEN ABOUT THE GROWING MILITARY MIGHT OF THE SOVIET UNION AND THE PROBLEMS FACING NATO. THERE SEEMS TO BE NO QUESTION THAT MOSCOW IS STRIVING TO ACHIEVE AN UNCHALLENGED MILITARY ADVANTAGE OVER NATO. BUT THE QUESTION IS, AT WHAT COST?

AMERICAN DEFENSE SPENDING ACCOUNTS FOR ABOUT FIVE PERCENT OF THE U.S. GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT (GNP). BY CONTRAST, THE SOVIET UNION'S MILITARY OUTLAYS ARE SAID TO EXCEED 13 PERCENT OF THAT COUNTRY'S G.N.P. CONSIDERING THAT AMERICAN LIVING STANDARDS ARE AMONG THE HIGHEST IN THE WORLD, WHILE LIVING STANDARDS IN THE SOVIET UNION RANK AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SCALE IN THE INDUSTRIALIZED WORLD, IT IS APPARENT THAT THE SOVIET MILITARY EFFORT WEIGHS HEAVILY ON THE CITIZENS OF THAT COUNTRY.

A REPORT RELEASED EARLIER IN THE YEAR BY THE WASHINGTON-BASED BROOKINGS INSTITUTION EMPHASIZED THE RAPID MODERNIZATION OF THE SOVIET AIR FORCE. SOVIET AIRCRAFT, THE REPORT SAID, ARE NOW CAPABLE OF LAUNCHING A "DEVASTATING" ATTACK ON NATO MILITARY INSTALLATIONS. THE BROOKINGS REPORT COINCIDED WITH A REPORT

COMPILED BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WHICH CITED A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE NOT ONLY IN SOVIET AIR AND GROUND MILITARY POWER BUT ALSO OF SOVIET NAVAL STRENGTH. THE BRITISH REPORT SAYS THE NUMBER OF NUCLEAR-POWERED SOVIET SUBMARINES IN THE EASTERN ATLANTIC HAS INCREASED DURING THE PAST 10 YEARS FROM 44 TO 104, WHILE MISSILE-ARMED CRUISERS AND DESTROYERS, THE BRITISH REPORT NOTES, INCREASED FROM SIX TO 23. GEOGRAPHICALLY, THE SOVIET NAVY HAS PENETRATED FOR THE FIRST TIME INTO MEDITERRANEAN WATERS AND IS MAKING INROADS IN THE STRATEGIC HORN OF AFRICA OVERLOOKING TRADITIONAL WESTERN OIL TANKER ROUTES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AND THE RED SEA.

NATO'S PROBLEMS MUST ALSO BE CONSIDERED. FOREMOST, PERHAPS, IS THE CONTINUING RIFT BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY, WHICH IMPAIRS THE ALLIANCE'S STRENGTH ON THE SOUTHERN FLANK. FOLLOWING THE 1974 TURKISH INVASION OF CYPRUS, GREECE SUSPENDED MILITARY PARTICIPATION IN THE ALLIANCE. TURKEY SUBSEQUENTLY WITHDREW U.S. RIGHTS TO USE TURKISH MILITARY BASES IN RETALIATION FOR THE PLACING OF AN ARMS EMBARGO AGAINST TURKEY BY THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS. BUT, THE START OF THIS YEAR SAW THE FORMATION OF A NEW GOVERNMENT IN TURKEY -- HEADED BY PREMIER BULENT ECEVIT. AND THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT MR. ECEVIT, WHO HAS BROADENED HIS POLITICAL BASE, WILL BE MORE INCLINED TO REACH A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WITH THE GREEKS NOT ONLY ON CYPRUS BUT ALSO ON THE AEGEAN SEABED CONTROVERSY -- AN AREA WHERE OIL WAS DISCOVERED IN 1973.

ON NATO'S NORTHERNMOST FLANK, IN THE NORWEGIAN ARCTIC PROVINCE OF FINMARK, NORWEGIAN BORDER GUARDS ARE FACING WHAT MILITARY EXPERTS BELIEVE IS THE LARGEST CONCENTRATION OF SOVIET FORCES IN THE WORLD. NORWEGIAN AUTHORITIES SAY THAT THE SOVIET

UNION HAD STEADILY INCREASED ITS MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE AREA, INCLUDING THE EXTENSION OF NAVAL AND AIR EXERCISES WESTWARD INTO THE NORWEGIAN SEA.

BUT, ALTHOUGH SOVIET MILITARY ARSENALS HAVE INCREASED GREATLY IN SIZE, SOME MILITARY ANALYSIS QUESTION THE OVERALL QUALITY OF CERTAIN ADVANCED WEAPONS. INDEED, U.S. INTELLIGENCE OFFICIALS SEE SOME MAJOR FLAWS IN SOVIET MILITARY TECHNOLOGY. IN THEIR OPINION, SOVIET INTERCONTINENTAL MISSILES ARE LESS ACCURATE THAN AMERICAN MISSILES. AT THE SAME TIME, THEY SAY, SOVIET MISSILE EXPERTS SEEM UNABLE TO MASTER SOLID-FUEL TECHNOLOGY FOR SOVIET ROCKETS. IN ADDITION, SOVIET FIGHTER PLANES ARE DESCRIBED AS BEING FAR BEHIND AMERICAN AIRCRAFT IN SOPHISTICATION. AND CIVIL DEFENSE, DESPITE HEAVY INVESTMENTS, REMAINS INADEQUATE.

PERHAPS THE MOST DIFFICULT PROBLEMS FACING THE SOVIET UNION IS OF A DIFFERENT NATURE. MOSCOW, WHOSE POWER EXTENDS FROM THE PACIFIC TO THE ELBE RIVER IN WESTERN EUROPE, HAS TO COPE WITH RESTLESS AND DIVERSE NATIONALITIES IN THE SOVIET UNION AND WITH POLITICAL DISSENT IN ITS OWN BACKYARD. PRESSED BY THE OBLIGATIONS THEY HAVE ASSUMED IN SIGNING THE 1975 FINAL ACT OF THE CONFERENCE ON EUROPEAN COOPERATION AND SECURITY IN HELSINKI, SOVIET LEADERS ARE HARD PUT TO EXPLAIN THEIR TREATMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATES. AT THE SAME TIME, MOSCOW'S ALLIES HAVE SHOWN INCREASING DISPLEASURE WITH SOVIET HEGEMONY.

THESE DEVELOPMENTS ARE NOT NECESSARILY PREJUDICIAL TO WORLD PEACE. FOR WITH THE PASSAGE OF YEARS NATO AND THE WARSAW PACT NATIONS HAVE COME TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER. THERE HAS BEEN A WIDER EXCHANGE OF PEOPLE AND IDEAS. BOTH SIDES ARE PLEDGED TO NOTIFY EACH OTHER OF PLANS TO HOLD MAJOR MILITARY MANEUVERS, AND

NATO AND WARSAW PACT OFFICERS ARE INVITED TO SEND OBSERVERS TO SUCH MANEUVERS ON A RECIPROCAL BASIS. MOREOVER, WITH SIGNS TO SOME FORWARD MOVEMENT IN THE SALT AND MBFR TALKS, THERE IS REASON TO HOPE THAT MUTUAL ADJUSTMENTS WILL BE MADE THAT WILL CONTRIBUTE TO WORLD PEACE.

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